

# UW System: Carbone oncologist identifies unconscious gender bias

Posted on Friday, Oct 11, 2019

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Media Contact: Susan Lampert Smith

3 p.m. CDT Oct. 11, 2019

(608) 890-5643

[Ssmith5@uwhealth.org](mailto:Ssmith5@uwhealth.org)

## **Carbone oncologist identifies unconscious gender bias**

MADISON, Wis. –When speaking at the world’s largest international oncology conference, female speakers were addressed less often by their professional title compared to male speakers, and were more likely to be introduced by their first name only.

Those are the takeaways from a study published today in the Journal of Clinical Oncology by [Dr. Narjust Duma](#), an oncologist and assistant professor of medicine at the [UW Carbone Cancer Center](#).

Duma and her team reviewed over 2,500 archived videos of speaker introductions from the 2017 and 2018 annual meetings of the American Society of Clinical Oncology, or ASCO. Nearly 800 videos met inclusion criteria.

In those introductions, 81 percent of male speakers were addressed by their

professional title, while only 62 percent of female speakers had their official titles used.

“Men and women are different, but we’re equal,” Duma said. “While we controlled for other factors, like stage of their career, we found that the only factor that mattered was their gender.”

In addition, 17 percent of female speakers were addressed by their first name, compared to just three percent of men.

This unconscious gender bias, Duma says, is important to recognize because it can affect how a presenter’s data are interpreted. “If you’re introduced with your professional title, people are more likely to believe your data and pay attention,” she said.

While the study identifies a problem, Duma says it also sets out to find solutions. Already, changes are being planned to how introductions will be made at the 2020 ASCO meetings.

More information about the study can be found at the [Journal of Clinical Oncology’s website](#).